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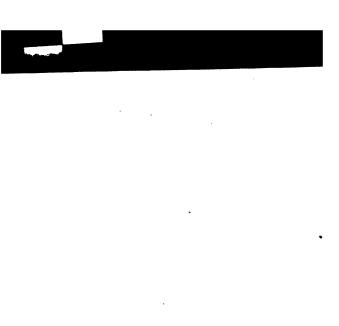
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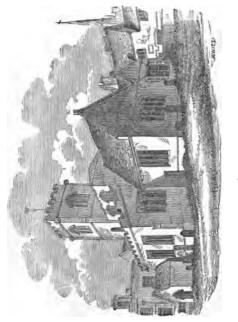
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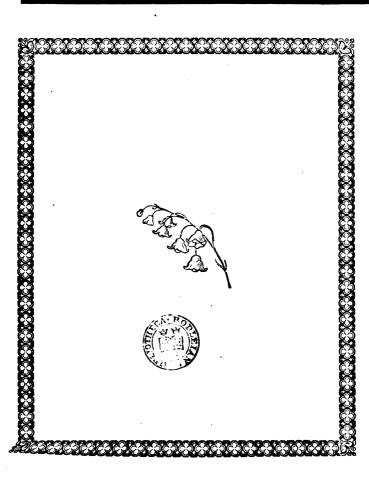
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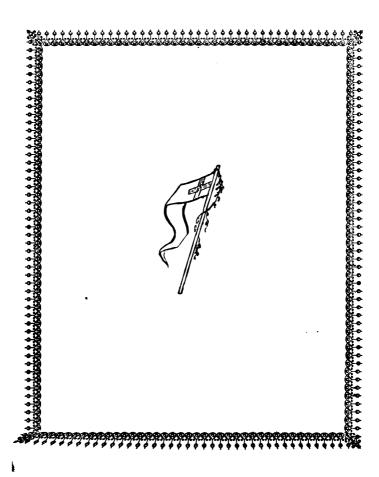
of the

Parish of S. Michael, in Derby,

S. Mary, in Lichtield,
(amongst whom he began the year.)
this Christmas remembrance is inscribed,
by their sincere friend,

J. K. C.

S. Michael's Vicarage, Derby, Xmas., 1856.





I.

Erne Lobe.

PREACHED IN ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, DERBY, JUNE 1, 1856.

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed, and in truth."—I. JOHN, III. 18.

OU will find the text in the Epistle for this day, (the Second Sunday after Trinity). St.

John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, and who had drank in so much of his Master's spirit, that his words were always steeped in love, is here writing to all those who had given up their old way of thinking—all who if they were Jews had given up their sacri-

fices and such like, now that the Messiah who was set forth in all those sacrifices had come into the world—or who if they were Gentiles, had given up their idols of wood and stone, and were trying to serve the Lord Jesus Christ. To all these St. John writes, and calls them "my little children;" not that they were all really children in years, for some of them were old and grey-headed men and women: but St. John felt to them, as a father feels towards his children. By St. John's teaching they had, we might say, begun life anew—they had been born again—and so he calls them, his "little children." And what is it that he has to say to them in this kind and tender way? It is this—"Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

Here is first, something we are not to do—we are not to love in word or in tongue.

And THEN something that we are to do—we are to love in deed and in truth.

First—there is something we are not to do—we are not to love in word nor in tongue.

What is the meaning of this? It means that we

are not in our words, or with our tongues to make a shew of loving, when we really hate.

If you turn to ii. Sam. xx. 9, you will see that a man may easily do this—you will there read that Joab, one of the captains of King David's army, was pursuing after Amasa, another captain, who they thought was going to desert from the king, and when Joab came up to Amasa, he said to him, "Art thou in health my brother, and Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him." But Amasa took no heed to the sword that was in Joab's hand, so Joab smote him therewith that he died.

And in the New Testament you will remember how Judas, one of the twelve disciples, came to Jesus in the garden: he had words of love on his tongue, he said "Master, Master," and kissed him—but, as you know, he had hatred in his heart.

So you see it is quite easy to make a pretence of love with our words, or with our tongues, and all the time to have no love, but only cruel hatred, in our hearts. Oh! let us all take care that we do not do this—let us never talk to any person as if we were their friends, and loved them dearly, and yet when their back is turned do them all the harm we can—speak all the evil against them that we can.

This is to be what the Bible calls a hypocrite. It is to be like a man who wears a mask, so that his out-side face is different from his real one underneath. We have all seen a boy hiding his own face under a black and ugly mask, but the hypocrite who loves only in word or in tongue, puts a fair mask of kind words over a black and ugly heart; he pretends to love, and really he hates.

And do not think it is only a little sin to hate any person; for though men do not count it a great sin, yet God does. God's word counts it as great a sin as murder. Look two verses above the text, v. 15, and you will see that "He that hateth his brother is a murderer."

But when St. John says "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue," does he mean that we are never to show our love by our words, that while we really do love in our hearts, we are always to speak in a cross, harsh way?

No, no; he means that what we say and what we feel are to agree together; we are to speak gentle, loving words, only we are to be sure that we speak them not in sham, but in deed and in truth.

Oh! Children, I wish I could persuade you all always to speak gently. In a great town like this, where you are often in the middle of crowds of people going towork, or coming from work, you will hear many coarse, rough, wicked words, spoken in a coarse, rough, wicked way; but let me persuade all of you to have this verse, as if written over the door of your lips:—

"Speak gently, it is better far
To rule by love than fear;
Speak gently, let not harsh words mar
The good you might do here."

It is a good rule, though a very hard one to keep, when you are angry to count ten before you speak at all; and when you do speak, try to speak gently, lovingly. You will then be something like Jesus when He was on earth, for no one ever heard a cross word fall from His holy lips; and I hope that there are some of you who can say—

"I long to be like JESUS,
Meek, lowly, loving, mild;
I long to be like JESUS,
The Father's holy child."

And for another reason it is worth while to try to speak gently; no one ever yet was persuaded by a loud and angry answer, however true it was; they might be cowed and frightened, but they never were persuaded; but the gentle voice and the quiet eye gain many a quiet victory. "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."—Prov. xv. 1.

Children, if you learn nothing else from this sermon, learn that it is a good thing to "speak gently." Though others are cross and harsh to you—though you are charged with what you feel to be no fault of yours, till your blood boils, and your choking heart

seems in your throat—yet pray that you may "speak gently." It is hard, but it is best, and it is bravest.

Yes, and even if they strike you, do not strike back, for Christ has said, "If a man smite thee on the one cheek turn to him the other also," that means bear it meekly, patiently. It is hard I know, Boys, but it is best, and it is bravest. You need not be a coward though you don't strike the boy that strikes you, for you have won a harder battle if you keep down your own temper, than if you were to strike him to the ground; and he begins the fight who strikes the second blow.

It was said of the good Archbishop Cranmer that the sure way to make him your friend was to do him an unkind turn. Do you think that the same could be said of many of us?

But look at the verse again, there is in the next part something which we are told to do—what is this? We are to love in deed and in truth.

Our love is not to be only in our words or on our

tongues, it is to be seen in our deeds, our doings. Joab's words were brotherly and kind, but his deed was cruel—when he plunged his sword into Amasa's side, and slew him.

The tongue of Judas was very smooth, but his heart was thirsting for innocent blood, and he had a band of ruffians ready when he gave the signal-kiss, to drag Jesus off to the Judgment hall, and to the Cross. As David says in Psalm lv, 21, "The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart; his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords."

But let us all try to have gentle words coming from gentle hearts. Even if our temper gets the better of us, and we give way to hard and angry words, yet let our doings soon show that we are sorry for the sin, and that love is in our hearts again.

Now, who are we to love? We are to love God.

We have not seen God, and can never see Him with these eyes, and it is not easy to love a Being whom we have never seen, still it can be done.

Suppose you had never seen your father or your mother that you could remember—if they had gone away across the seas to America before you were old enough to know them, still there is something in your breast that would make you love them, and yearn for them; and when now and then you got a letter from them saying how much they thought about you, and how they hoped that by and bye you would come over where they were, then you would love them more and more.

Now, though we have never seen God, yet we know that He loves us. Look at St. John's first Epistle iv. 10, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us,"—and since God loves us, we ought to love God; and so St. John writes in the 19th verse, "We love Him because He first loved us,

And Jesus, who was God, He loved us too. He loved us all so well that he gave himself to die for us; but He loved children above all.

Once some Hebrew mothers brought their children

to Him, that He might touch and bless them. Children are frightened in a crowd, and at the sight of strangers—and we may be sure these little ones would be frightened, and would cling closely to their mothers till they saw the loving eye of Jesus—then they would stretch out their little arms to Him, and would nestle in His bosom, as He spoke over them those precious words—"the child's gospel" as they have been called—"Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God."

And since God has so loved us, surely we should love Him, with no sham words, no false tongue, but in deed and in truth. And do not say or think you are too young to know and to feel love to God, and God's love for you.

Let me tell you about a little child I knew. He was in the Infant school, at Lichfield; a beautiful little boy, with rosy cheeks, and bright and laughing eye. But by and bye, his place in school was empty, and I heard that he was ill, and I went and found

him on his little bed, with his rosy cheeks all faded, and his bright eyes heavy with pain.

He was so young, and in such suffering, I hardly thought that he would understand a prayer; but I knelt by him, and prayed with him; and I found afterwards that he did understand, and told his grandfather about it. But that day he grew suddenly worse, and he knew he was very ill; and at first he said that he would not die: "I won't die, mother, send for the doctor;" but after a little, he begged them to send for his father, who was at work.

And when his father came, and saw his sweet boy at the point of death, he could not keep back his tears, but when the child saw them, he said—"Don't cry, father—don't cry, God loves me," and soon he died.

Now this little child was not four years old, and yet he felt that God loved him, and the feeling comforted him even in the hour of death, for he loved the God, who loved him. None of you then, Dear Children, are too young to love God.

But you must not only love God, you must love your parents, your brothers and sisters, your companions, your neighbours, indeed, it is by our love to these, that we must show whether we really love God or not. For look in this Epistle, iv. 20, and you will find St. John writing "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

O, then, children, in deed and in truth love your father and mother, if you are happy enough to have them.

Do not make a pretence of loving them when vou want to coax something from them, and then when they tell you to do what you don't like, give them a saucy answer, or sit and sulk, and refuse to do it, for this is to love only in tongue, and not in truth.

If your father and mother are kind and loving to you, a very heathen would know to be the same to them. But even if they are unkind to you, as a Christian you must be kind to them. Besides, 20 .

though they may sometimes be unkind, yet think how much they have done for you before you could help yourself; and so be gentle, though they are harsh; be obedient, though they are rough, so long at least as they do not order you to do anything which God's word plainly forbids.

And in behaving in this way, you may win over your father or your mother—you may have the great joy of seeing their hearts softened by your example,

A mother who had such a daughter, once said, "I know that she is right and I am wrong; I have seen her firm under reproach, patient when provoked, cheerful in suffering; I ought to have taught her, but really, she is my teacher. I will, however, try and be like her." And soon, instead of hindering her daughter, she was walking with her in the way that leads to heaven.

And, children, love your brothers and sisters. It is very sad to see *any* children quarrelling and fighting, but most sad of all, to see brothers and

sisters doing so—to see those who ought to make each other's life happier, making it wretched. If I am speaking to any children who quarrel with their brothers or sisters let me tell them they will be sorry for it some day.

A little boy, a Sunday scholar, had died. His body was laid in a darkened room waiting to be hid away in the grave, his mother and little sister went in to look once more on the face so lovely even in death. As they stood there, the sister asked to take hold of her brother's hand—and when the mother placed the cold, white hand in hers, she kissed it fondly, and then looking up through her tears, she said, "Mother, this little hand never struck me."

But, lastly, you must not only love your brothers and sisters, but your companions, your schoolfellows, your neighbours.

Jesus Christ when he was on earth showed Hislove to all he met. It did not matter whether they were rich or poor, whether they were rude or civil to Him, he loved them all, and did them good. Children, try to do the same. Try to love even those who hate you and wish to hurt you. Try to do them some good for body or soul, Don't think that you can't do anything. I know you can't do as much as grown up people, but you can do something—you can say a kind word to some one in trouble—you can shield some child who is being teased by bad boys or girls—you can look in on some aged person, perhaps your grandfather or grandmother, help them to tidy their room on a Saturday, or run their errands, or even if you can't do anything for them, it will be like a sunbeam in the cottage, that you have come wishing to do what you could.

Or cannot you do something for any one's soul? It is very doubtful if any one will find his way to heaven who is trying to go there alone. Are you trying to lead some one with you? You can, perhaps, say a kind word, or try to teach a little that you know to some children who have no father or mother to care for them, or you may give them some little book that you have read, or you may persuade

them to come to school or to church, or if you cannot help in any other way, you can pray to God for them.

Try to love all with whom you have to do at home, at work, at school. Try to love them not in tongue only, but in deed and in truth; and if you cannot do much good, do a little, do all you can, and angels can do no more!





Çodl<u>n Şear</u>

PREACHED IN S. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, DERBY, JULY 6, 1856.

"Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord."—PSALM XXXIV. A.

AST month it was St. John who gave us our text and teaching for our Children's Sermon. John, who was at first an humble fisherman in the Sea of Galilee, and afterwards the Disciple whom Jesus loved; John, who stood at the foot of the Cross, and, after Christ's death, was a preacher to the nations; who was banished to the island of Patmos, where he saw those wonderful sights

which he tells us about in the last book of our Bibles; and who settled, at length, in the city of Ephesus, from which, when he was very old, he wrote those three letters, which are printed just before the Book of Revelations.

So that for nearly 2000 years this aged John has been teaching to all who would hear or read his words the same lesson which he taught us, "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." And I do hope that some of you have tried to take his advice, and that you have begun to speak more gently, or to act more kindly to some of those around you, even if they do not speak gently or act kindly to you.

But though this Lesson is so old, given nearly 2000 years ago, our Lesson for to-day is much older still; it goes back 1000 years further: It is 3000 years since it was spoken for the first time, and it comes from a very different kind of teacher; the other came from the humble fisherman who had become a holy Apostle—this comes from a shepherd

who had become a great King—we have a Royal Teacher to-day.

But before I talk to you about David, I must tell you what made him write this Psalm and when he wrote it.

You all remember that when David was a lad he was sent on an errand by his father to his three brothers, who were soldiers in Saul's army; and when he came to the camp he found that Saul and all the people that were with him were terribly afraid of a mighty giant, Goliath of Gath, who came every morning and every evening in front of the tents of Israel and challenged any of Saul's warriors to fight with him: but no one dared to go out to meet him—till David came—and then he slew him with a sling and a stone, because he trusted in the living God.

But Saul the King, though he had promised to give great rewards to any one who could conquer the Philistine, yet, when the danger was over, like many people still, he soon forgot his promises and treated

David very unkindly and when he heard the people all praising David for being so brave, he even tried to kill him, so that in a few years David had to run away from his own country—and where do you think he went to? to the very country of Gath, and with Goliath's great sword in his hand.

We wonder why he went to Gath, where we should have thought that the friends of the Giant would be sure to kill him in revenge. Perhaps it was, that being a brave and generous man himself, he felt sure that a brave enemy in distress would be protected, even in Gath, if he threw himself on their mercy: just as our own Queen Margaret trusted her little son, Prince Edward, to the robber whose hand would have been raised against them, but who could not find in his heart to harm those who had put such trust and confidence in him,

And so David found at Gath, for the King, whose name was Achish or Abimelech, received him kindly. But though the King was friendly, the King's courtiers and servants were afraid of David; perhaps

they could not so easily forgive him for killing their champion, and so they speak against him to the King; and David is sore afraid, he does not know how to escape; at last he hits upon a strange plan, he pretends to be a madman, as you will find stated at the head of the Psalm, "he changed his behaviour before Abimelech" or Achish, and so Abimelech was very anxious to get rid of him, and "drove him away" and he departed.

And it was when he thought over this narrow escape that he had made, that David, when he was King of Jerusalem, sang this Psalm of thanksgiving to God, which we have read in the Psalms for this afternoon, and from which I have drawn my text.

And you see that though he was a King, he did not forget the young. Like a far greater King, who sprang from David's line, of whom we read in the second lesson this morning, "Jesus the Son of David" and who said "Suffer the little children to come unto me," so David says "Come ye children, hearken unto me."

But it is time to ask what is this Lesson which the King gives us—

David was very skilled in Music. When the wicked King Saul was troubled with an evil spirit from the Lord and could not rest, David was sent to soothe him by playing soft tunes on the harp. But is is not music that he teaches here, he does not say "Come ye children hearken unto me, I will teach you to play upon the harp or to sing sweet songs."

David was a brave soldier too, the women sang one to another "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands." But it is not war that he teaches here, he does not say "Come ye children hearken unto me, I will teach you to fight, to handle well the sword and spear."

No, it is something very different to these, "Come ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord."

What is the fear of the Lord?

As I have often told you, there are two kinds of "fear of the Lord."

There was a man long ago to whom God was very kind; He gave him a beautiful garden to live in, and there was only one little thing which God said the man must not do: But the man did the very thing about which God had said, "Thou shalt not do it," and then the man learnt the "fear of the Lord;" he never knew it before: God used to come and walk, and talk with him in the garden, and he had no fear. But very soon after he had disobeyed God, God came down and cried to the man, "Where art thou," and the man said, as he came out from among the trees where he had tried to hide himself, "I heard Thy voice in the garden and I was afraid." Gen. iii. 10.

Here was one kind of "fear of the Lord," but not the right kind; Sin, was this man's Teacher, but David would not teach us to sin, so this is not the kind of fear that he wishes us to learn.

But long ago there was another man. He is walking up the side of a steep hill, he has a knife in one hand, and a lighted lamp in the other though it is broad day, and by his side there runs a little lad with

a bundle of faggots on his shoulder, and when they come to the top of the hill, the man takes the sticks that the boy has carried up, and when he has made a kind of table of stones and turf, he lays the wood in order on the top of it, and then he takes a cord and binds the boy's hands and feet, and all the while the tears run down his cheek, and his fingers shake, so that he can hardly tie the knots, for the lad is his only son and he loves him very dearly. But for all that, see what he is doing! he lays his son upon the wood and takes the knife to slay him.

But just when his hand is lifted up to strike, a voice comes from heaven and stops him, it says, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do anything unto him, for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."—Gen, xxii, 12.

Now this is the right kind of "fear of the Lord:" God puts it in the heart: he who has it loves God and trusts God, and he fears to disobey Him lest he grieve Him, or lose his favour, and He would do anything rather than that.

Some of you may have seen a picture of a poor black slave, like Uncle Tom, crouching down on the ground, while his cruel master holds a horsewhip over him: there is fear in the heart of that poor slave, and it is this kind of fear that Adam felt, it is this kind of "fear of the Lord" that the guilty sinner feels; but this is not the fear that David wishes to teach children.

But some of you have a kind father; he has told you, I will suppose, not to go near the river in case you fall in and are drowned; a companion comes and asks you to go, but you say No! not because you are frightened that your father will find you out and punish you, but because you love and trust your father, and you fear to pain him, or to lose his love.

This is the kind of fear that Abraham had, which God praised; this is the right kind of "fear of the Lord:" this is the kind that David would teach the children.

But perhaps some of you, Boys, are thinking that

you don't want to learn any kind of fear, you think a man who fears must be a coward—but did the fear of the Lord make David a coward?

No! No! One day as he was keeping his father's sheep, there came a lion and a bear and took a lamb out of the flock: a coward would have run away, but David went after the lion and smote him, and delivered the lamb out of his mouth, and when the lion arose against him he caught him by his beard and smote him again and slew him, and when the bear attacked him he slew it also.

And on that day when he stood before Goliath, in the valley of Elah, he showed he was no coward then: David would only reach up to about the Giant's elbow, he was but a shepherd boy, and the other a man of war from his youth: yet David was not afraid of him, but went out and fought with him and slew him!

David was no coward himself; and he won't teach us to be cowards. He that fears the face of man is a coward: he that fears God is truly brave: there is nothing else that he can fear. Let us all then pray that we may learn the right fear of the Lord. It is the very first of all lessons; for as David says in the last verse of Pslam cxi. "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

And it is a very blessed thing to have this fear of the Lord: look what David says about it in the 7th verse: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him and delivereth them."

We have many enemies that we do not see, and cannot see, such as the Devil and evil spirits: We have no power of our own to fight against them, but if we fear the Lord in the right way, He sends His angels to keep guard round us, so that nothing can harm us.

Then look at the 9th verse: "0! fear the Lord, ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him,"

Here is another blessing that follows on "the fear of the Lord," "no want," that is, no real want.

It is true that you may know (as I know) some who fear the Lord, and who yet feel the want of

clothes, or the want of food: but such persons, though they may go about almost in rags, though they may not know where they are to get their next meal, yet feel "no want!" they have little, but God makes that little enough.

And so they are able to feel like a poor widow of whom I have read somewhere: a visitor came suddenly into her little room and found her thanking God for a crust of bread, and was surprised that she should be so thankful for so little: The widow said, "What! shall I not be thankful when I have all this and Jesus Christ besides."

Ah! it is this, "besides," Dear Children, that fills up every want: those who have "the fear of the Lord" have Jesus Christ as their friend, and so they can feel "no want."

But how does David fulfil his promise? he says, "I will teach you the fear of the Lord." How does he teach us? Look at the verses that come after my text, the 13th and 14th: "Keep thy tongue from

evil, and thy lips from speaking guile: Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it."

Do not soil your tongue with a bad word. I often wish I could stop my ears as I go along the streets, and it makes me sad to think you children must hear the dreadful words I hear and perhaps far oftener than I hear them. Oh! let me ask you whenever you hear them, to send up a silent prayer to heaven, "God forgive that poor man, or that poor woman, and teach them to fear Thee:" try to keep bad words out of your minds, don't let them lodge there, or if you have learnt them and cannot forget them, (and they are very hard to forget,) at least never let them cross your lips.

Let me tell you a little story about John Bunyan who wrote the famous book called the "Pilgrim's Progress." When he was young he was very wicked. One day he was cursing and swearing under a shop-window, when the woman of the house told him, "that he was enough to ruin all the boys in the town if they came in his way."

He stood silent and hung his head in shame, and what thought was passing through his mind at that moment? it was this, "Oh! how I wish I might be a little child again, that my father might teach me to speak without this wicked way of swearing."

Children, you see John Bunyan was sorry that he had not begun right: it is not too late for many of you, I hope, to begin right: never speak the first wicked word, nor tell the first lie, nor do anything that you know to be wrong for the first time: begin right and your heavenly Father promises to keep you right, for he says, "they that seek me early shall find me."

But not only must you keep your tongue from evil you must also keep your lips from "speaking guile," i. e. you must never speak lying or cheating words.

Some people seem to think that it is very clever to cheat and deceive. I have even known parents who would praise their children for being, as they said, "sharp," that meant for being good hands at taking other people in: alas! they soon found that

the sharp tricks which they had praised or laughed at, when done to others, were done to themselves also; and they had the pain and disgrace of finding themselves robbed and cheated by their own children.

And of all kinds of speaking guile, that is the worst when people talk very piously and pretend to be very religious, in order, perhaps, that they may get good people to help them, when all the time they are very wicked: such people are like a kind of coat which is made now-a-days which is one colour on one side and another colour on the other side, so that you may wear one side out on one day, and the other side the next day.

And just so these persons have one way of speaking to good people and quite another way of speaking to their own family.

But no one who has "the fear of the Lord" within him will ever do this, for God sees the heart: He sees both sides of the coat at once, while man only sees one side: try then, dear children, "to be true

and just in all your dealings;" do not cheat or lie even in the least matter, not even in your play.

Another way by which we are to learn "the fear of the Lord" is, that we are to depart from evil."

God has put in all our breasts a conscience, something that tells us what is right and what is wrong, and whenever we feel a thing to be wrong we are to depart from it.

A man once took his little boy with him into a field where he was going to steal some corn; the man's conscience told him that he was doing wrong, and he was afraid of being caught, and so he looked first on the one side, and then on the other, behind the hedge and behind the stack, to see if any body was looking, and then he was going to carry away the corn, but the little boy said "Father, you forgot to look one way, you forgot to look up."

If we would always remember to look up! if, whenever sins tempt us, we would only feel the power of four little words "Thou God seest me" we should be sure to depart from evil.

And we should try to do the next thing which David teaches us: we would try "to do good."

But can children do good?

Oh! yes they can. Children very seldom have money to give to the needy, and they are too young to watch and nurse the sick; but they can do little acts of kindness; they can give gentle words and loving smiles, and these do good: the sun seems to shine brighter for them, and the green earth to look greener.

But, if I knew them, there is not time to tell all the little ways in which each of you may do good; but if you will read a beautiful Story-book which is in your Library, called "Ministering Children," you will see that there are many ways in which even the little ones among you may do good.

But I have only one more thing to say a few words about. David says that if we are to learn "the fear of the Lord," we must "seek peace and pursue it."

This is just the same lesson that St. John gave

when he wrote that we should love one another in deed and in truth—peace and love always go together.

Oh! then seek, if it be possible, to live peaceably with all men. There may be times when it is not possible. But take care that it be not your fault that peace is broken.

If any one quarrels with you, try to "Overcome evil with good."

I will tell you how a little girl, of five years old, once did that, how she overcame evil with good, and made peace again. Her brother, who sat next her in school, and who was two years older than she was, struck her with his fist and hurt her; she was angry in a moment, and raised her hand to strike him. But the teacher, who had seen what passed, said, "Mary you had better kiss your brother."

Mary dropped her hand and looked at the teacher, as if she didn't quite understand. She had never been taught to return good for evil. She thought that if her brother struck her, of course she must strike him back, so she dropped her hand and did nothing.

The teacher looked very kindly at her, and said again, "Mary, you had better kiss your brother—see how angry and unhappy he looks;" and then Mary threw both her little arms round her brother's neck and kissed him. He never had had such a kind return for a blow, and very soon there was love and peace between them again; and those who seek peace will often find it when they give a kiss for a blow—when they do a kind action to every one who does an unkind one to them.

But we are not only to seek peace, we are to pursue it. We are to go out of our way after it; and I think this means that we are not only to live in love and peace ourselves, but wisely to try and make peace when we see others quarrelling and fighting. Wicked men and lads take pleasure in seeing other men fight, or even in setting on dogs and other dumb animals to bite and tear each other; but those who fear the Lord will hate such sad sights—will always

try to make those who are enemies to be friends to each other, and so will be happy on earth and happy in heaven; for our Saviour said, "Blessed are the Peace Makers, for they shall be called the CHILDREN OF GOD."





III.

The Tittle Maid.

PREACHED IN S. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, DERBY, AUGUST 3, 1856.

"The Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife.

"And she said unto her mistress, 'Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.'

"And one went in and told his lord, saying, 'Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.'"
—II. KINGS, v. 2, 3, 4.

HERE are two ways in which we may teach anything. One way is through the ear, the other through the eye; one is by saying, "Do as I tell you," the other by saying, "Do as I

do." The first is called, teaching by precept. The second, teaching by example.

If the drill sergeant were teaching some raw recruits how to march, he might either stand and shout to them words of command, tell them to straiten their knees, and square their shoulders, hold up their heads, and so on; or he might put himself in front of them, and march before them, telling them to fix their eyes on him, and copy him as closely as they could. If he did the first, he would teach by *precept*, if the second, by *example*.

Or, if you were teaching a little girl to sew; one way would be to say "Hold your needle in this way, and the cloth in this way, and then make your stitch," that would be to teach by *precept*; or you might get a piece of cloth, and a needle and thread, and sit down beside her, and say, "Look at my fingers, and try to use your own in the same way," this would be to teach by *example*.

Now, the best teachers use both of these, sometimes the one, sometimes the other. So the Bible, the best of all teachers, teaches children sometimes by precept, sometimes by example. St. John said to you, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. That was precept. King David said to you, "Come ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord—keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it," That is precept again.

But the first lesson of this morning's service, should teach children by example. And so I am going to try and give you a peep into the depth of the dim old time, and to draw a picture of a little maiden who lived in those days; and I wish to hold it up to you, that you may try to copy, though not the very same things that she did, yet the right spirit in which she did them.

And may the Great God who taught the little maid, and who has told us the good deed that she did, may He bend our hearts, so that we may learn something from her story, which may make us wiser and better.

And first, let me ask you to fancy that you are looking into a happy home; a cottage standing on one of the sloping hills of Samaria! It is in a village almost hid in a grove of fig trees, and olive trees, and orange trees, laden with fruit. For this was most likely the kind of house, which was the home of the little maiden, whose example I wish you to follow.

I cannot tell you whether she was one of a large circle of brothers and sisters, or whether she was the only child of her parents, or of a widowed mother. I am only sure of this, that she had something in her heart, which would make her the joy of all the household, whether they were few or many.

But that joy was not to last long. There came a day when regiments of soldiers marched into this peaceful village: "The Syrians had gone out by companies," they trampled through the vineyards, and burnt down the houses, and seized the people

who lived in them; and they came to the happy home of this little maiden and they "carried her away captive out of the land of Israel." Perhaps they would leave her father and mother, if they were past work, to die of broken hearts; perhaps they would carry them off for sale far away to some other city; perhaps they would kill them, if they tried to defend their home.

And if the little maid had brothers and sisters, the fierce soldiers would divide them among themselves and carry them away too, to sell them wherever they could, most likely, never to see each other any more.

Dear Children, you who have happy homes, how thankful you should be, that you need not be afraid lest savage soldiers come to tear you away from them, as they did in years gone by, when there was war in our country. How thankful you should be that you are not living in Africa, instead of England; for in Africa, the negro knows that any day the white sail of the slave ship may come in sight—the

savage crew may break into his hut—put chains on father, and mother, and children—cast them into the hold of the ship, with hundreds more, packed so close, that many of them die, and though dead, are left chained to the living ones. And then when they come to the slave market, they are sold by auction—husband torn from wife—brother from sister—parent from child!

And this is no old story taken from books; the very last news that came from America, said that all these dreadful cruelties are now going on there to supply slaves for the Island of Cuba; and that the profit is so great, that though it is against the law, yet, even in New York, ships were secretly fitted out for this horrible trade.

It is common enough to hear people grumble that they have to work "like slaves," but though the work of many of you is very hard, yet it is not like a slave's labour. When you are forced to work without pay—sold like cattle—treated like machines—when there is no law to limit the hours of daily work—no law to

punish the master, whose cruelty might cause your injury or death—then and not till then, will it be true that any one in our free England works "really like a slave." Let us be thankful, and let us pray God to protect the defenceless Africans, from those who are so greedy for the price of blood.

But the little Hebrew maiden is a slave; she has been torn from her home and all its joys, and now she has been brought to Damascus, and been given to Naaman, a chief captain in the Syrian army, and a great favourite with the king; and she has become lady's-maid to Naaman's wife.

She lives now in a house grander by far than her father's cottage; the rooms are lofty, "cieled with cedar, and painted with vermilion;" in the wide courts fountains sparkle amid the bright flowers and sweet-smelling shrubs. But, ah! she would far rather be at home. "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

A poor lark, hanging in its prison by the windowside in the close and crowded street, would not be happier if you were to gild the wires of its cage, and give it its seed and water out of vessels of pure gold. It is not *finery* that it wants, but *freedom*. It wants to sing its glad songs up at heaven's golden gates. It wants to sip the dew-pearls from the green grass, of which the piece of withering turf in the bottom of the cage, is only a cruel mockery.

And so the little Hebrew maiden, she would have liked to sing her cheerful songs under their own vine, and their own old fig-tree at home, in the far land of Israel.

But did she pine, and fret, and murmur, because she could not do this? Did she do all she could to vex those who kept her there a slave?

I am sure she did not; she had been a gentle daughter and sister at home, and now though sometimes sorrowful she is always kind-hearted and anxious to do good, even to her enemies.

And if the little maid had been of a spiteful selfish temper, there was one thing in Naaman's house that she would have been glad to see, though she would have been afraid to show that she was glad about it. There was one thing, which she knew took all the sweetness out of her master's cup; spoiled all the pleasures of his life. He was rich and brave—had won great battles—the king loved him—all men honoured him—what could he want more?

He wanted just what almost all of you children (even the poorest of you) have, and, I dare say, think very little about, for most people do not know its value till they lose it, he wanted health. Naaman was a leper.

Leprosy is a dreadful disease. It was once very common in England, it is now happily very rare: but in the countries of the East it is still very common, as you remember it was, in the times of which the Bible speaks.

Leprosy changed the pure blood and made the flesh rot and crumble off the joints: the sore sick body became as "white as snow," and only God could stay the malady and save the leper's life.

You will learn what a loathsome disease it was when you hear the orders which were binding upon every Jew, who was attacked by it. As soon as the priest said it was a case of leprosy, the unhappy man was obliged to leave his wife and children, to stay outside the city, and never to draw near to the temple even to worship God; he was ordered to tear his clothes, to put dust on his head, to hang a cloth over his upper lip, that his breath might not come near any one, and to cry aloud as he passed along the road "unclean, unclean," lest any should approach him unawares.

You may see from this strictness of the Jewish law, that it was a very terrible sickness that Naaman had.

But the little maid, when she looked upon his affliction, did not rejoice over it, and think him well-punished for keeping her from her home, but she was sorry for his suffering: she remembered that in her own land, God had given great power to Elisha, so that he could raise the dead to life, and find food in

time of famine, and do many other wonderful things; and so she felt sure that, if it pleased God, he could cure this leprosy of her master's. And with her heart full of this, one day as she was waiting upon her mistress, (perhaps she saw Naaman passing) she could not help saying, "Would God" that is, I wish that it would please God, "that my Master were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy."

It does not seem that her mistress took any notice of what she said; perhaps she told her that she was only a foolish little Hebrew slave-girl, and she had better mind her own business; at any rate, it was not her mistress who repeated the words to Naaman, for "one went and told his master, thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel."

And soon the little maiden's words were carried to the ears of the King of Syria, and he thought it worth while to try what could be done in Israel for his favourite Captain. So he picked out a handsome present for Joram, King of Israel, and sent it by Naaman's hand, and wrote a letter, asking the King to heal Naaman's leprosy.

And when Joram read the letter, asking him to cure an incurable disease, he at once thought that the King of Syria was trying to pick a quarrel with him, and that when he said he could not grant the request, that then he would again ravage his country; and so forgetting the power of God, he rent his clothes, in token of his grief and terror; and thus Naaman was very nearly sent back to his own country unhealed. But when the prophet Elisha heard what had taken place, he sent to the King of Israel and said, "Why hast thou rent thy clothes? let the man come to me and I will show him that there is a prophet in Israel."

And soon Naaman's chariot and horses stood at Elisha's door. But the prophet did not come out to do homage to the great man: he only sent and told him to go and dip seven times in Jordan. At first Naaman proudly refused, but afterwards, on the advice of his servants, he humbled himself and went;

and then his flesh, that was white and clammy, came again fresh and ruddy, "like unto the flesh of a little child and he was clean;" and he confessed "There is no God in all the earth but in Israel," and we may hope that from that time he would worship no other.

And thus, from the single exclamation of the little kind-hearted Hebrew maid, the great captain was cured of his leprosy. He went out of Damascus a wretched leper, he came back strong and healthy. He went out an idolater, he came back a worshipper of the only living and true God, the God in whom the little maid trusted, and to whom we may be sure, she prayed.

And now, what are some of those things in which you, dear children, should follow the example of this little maid?

Try always and everywhere to do good. Like the little maid, try and do good to your enemies—if you have any.

There was once a little girl, the daughter of Dr. Doddridge, who had no enemies, and I will tell you

in her own words how she managed it: she was asked how it came about that everybody loved her. She answered, "that she supposed it was because she loved everybody."

But even if you love everybody, you will be sure, as you grow older, to fall in with those who will dislike you, and probably vex and annoy you for your very gentleness; and to them you must chiefly try to do good.

There was in a school a great bey who abused the younger ones so much that the teacher took the votes of the school whether he should be sent away altogether or not. All the smaller boys voted that he should be sent away, except one, (who was scarcely five years old), who voted that he should be allowed to stay, though the little fellow knew that the other would continue to teaze and bully him. "Why did you vote for him to stay?" asked the teacher. "Because," the child said, "if he is expelled, perhaps he will not learn any more about God, and so he will be more wicked still." "Do

you forgive him then?" asked the teacher again. "Yes," said the child, "father, and mother, and you, all forgive me when I do wrong; God forgives me too, and I must do the same."

Let us then all try to forgive and to do good to those we most dislike, and who seem most to dislike us; and so to obey the words of Jesus in His sermon on the mount, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."—Matth. v. 44.

And like this little maid, try and do good to the sick. There is many a little thing that a child can do for the afflicted and bedridden. There is something very comforting to the heart of the sick, in finding that those, who are generally full of spirits and gaiety, can feel for them, and sit quietly by them, ready to reach them any little thing that they may want; ready to repeat some of their simple hymns, and to read some of the comforting words of the Lord Jesus.

I have heard of a lady, who was very ill, and on the table by her bedside, there were many gifts from her friends, dainties to tempt her to eat, scents to refresh her when she was faint; but of them all, she said, what gave her most pleasure, was a sweet flower that been brought to her bed-side by the gentle hand of a loving child.

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Oh! then, children, if there are any sick folk among your neighbours, try to use the power that you have to comfort. It is not the scent of the flower that cheers the sick; it is rather this, to know that there is some boy or girl, even among the gay and lightsome, who is so sorry for them as to come and do all they can to soothe their sufferings, and cheer their drooping spirits. The sick are often fretful from pain. They are ready to say bitterly, that no one careth for them now, and even the visit of a child, may drive away this evil spirit.

"A little word, in kindness spoken, A motion or a tear, Has often healed the heart that's broken,
And made a friend sincere.

Then deem it not an idle thing,
A pleasant word to speak;
The face you wear, the thought you bring,
The heart may heal or break."

In young or old, but chiefly in the young, this love and sympathy, is the real "king of all the wizards." This can do more wonders than all the conjurers in the world, for it can pour balm into the wounded heart, can cheer the troubled breast, and bring a bright smile over the pinched features of weary-hearted poverty.

Do not then, like Naaman, be anxious to do some great thing. Remember that life is made up of little duties, little pleasures, little comforts, little kindnesses, little joys.

"We little know, how light a thing,
May dry the tears of woe;
The pittance small, the one kind word,
With which we all can part,
May take the sting from poverty,
Or save the broken heart."

And when this conjuror, Loving-kindness, takes with it, as its magic-wand, the promises of God's Word, then it can do yet greater things than these; for then it can give hopes to the despairing sinner; give peace to the weak and faltering penitent.

And cheering as these promises are at all times, they are most cheering in the dark hours of trouble. They are like the lamp that is put into the railway carraige: you enter a carriage-you are busy saying good-bye to your friends at the station—the train moves on-you look out of the window on field, wood, and village, as you dart past them-or you talk with your fellow-travellers-but suddenly the train plunges, with a loud whistle, into a tunnelthe bright sun-light is lost, and then for the first time you notice the railway carriage-lamp! It was there all the time, yet, because the sun made its light useless, you did not observe it. And, I say, that God's promises are like that railway lamp; the christian traveller has them always with him, though when the sun is shining, and prosperity beaming on

him, he does not remark them, but, when trouble comes, when his way is through the darkness of sorrow, then do these promises shed around him their welcome and cheering light.

But there is one other thing in which I would ask you to follow the example of this little maid. Try always, and everywhere, to speak good.

We little know where our words will travel to, or what shape they will take, when once they have passed the door of our lips. Many people will repeat them, and many hear them, whom we never intended them to reach, just as these few words of the little maid were passed from mouth to mouth, till they reached the ears of the king himself.

Her words were kind words, kindly spoken, and they gave back kindly echoes, and did great good. But her words would have travelled none the less, but all the more, had they been unkind words, intended to injure or mislead. And it is so still. There are some persons who seem to be always on the watch for some tale or scandal which they may

pass on. They do not care to repeat what is for the good of others, but anything that throws a stain over anybody else is touched up and passed on; "thus and thus said so and so" is for ever on their tongue. Children, shun such tale-bearing, gossip-spreading companions. Remember, whoever makes you laugh by telling you of the faults, and failings, and follies of others, is quite sure to make others laugh by telling them of yours.

And not only avoid such; take care that they never hear from you any unkind speech which they may retail with your name to it. Pray for the meekness and gentleness of Christ in your hearts, that so the law of kindness may be ever on your tongues, for it is "out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh." Determine, by God's help, to "speak evil of no man," or at least, never to speak ill of any person unless you are forced by duty, and then only say what you are sure is true. And when you hear another evil spoken of, then if you know any good about him, be sure to mention it.

These kind words are the brightest and the sweetest flowers on earth, and they make almost a little heaven here below around every one, who abounds in them. Seek then in this to follow the example of the little maid, of whom I have been speaking—we do not even know her name—and yet the kind words that she spoke, not only did the greatest things for her master, but they have been told even in all the world for a memorial of her.

"Then speak no ill—a kindly word
Can never leave a sting behind;
And oh! to breathe each tale we've heard,
Is far beneath a noble mind.

Full oft a better seed is sown,

By choosing thus the kinder plan,

For if but little good be known,

Still let us speak the best we can.

Then speak no ill, but gentle be
To others failings as your own;
If you're the first a fault to see,
Be not the first to make it known.

For life is but a passing day,

No lips can tell how brief its span;
Then oh! the little time we may,

Let's speak of all the best we can."





IV.

Che Gripple.

PREACHED IN S. MICHAEL'S SCHOOL-ROOM, DERBY, OCTOBER 6, 1856.

"Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up and fled; and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth."—II. Samuel, IV. 4,

ERE we have another peep into the dim old times of Israel. We lately learnt some lessons from the story of the little Hebrew maiden; to-day, we catch a glimpse of the child-life

of a little Hebrew boy. He was of royal blood, for his father Jonathan was a prince in Israel, and his grandfather was king.

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Saul and Jonathan had gone out to battle with the fierce nation, the Philistines, who lived near them. Jonathan's little son was five years old, and was left in the care of the nurse in the palace at Gibeah. If you turn to i. Samuel xxix. 1. you will there find how it fared with Saul and Jonathan in the war. You will find that "the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek; and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel;" and that there a great battle was fought. Samuel xxxi. i. you will find how it ended, "the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa," and among those slain, there was King Saul, his three sons, his armour bearer, and all his men.

There were, however, some men of Israel "on the other side of the valley," and when they saw what had happened, they ran away from their homes and

left them to the Philistines, and some of them ran with the terrible news to Gibeah, where the young child was.

The sad tidings "out of Jezreel" came into the palace. The faithful nurse of Jonathan's little son, expecting that the cruel soldiers of the Philistine army would come to plunder the king's house, and to kill the royal children, took up the child of five years old in her arms and fled away. But as she fled, in her terror she let him fall; and ever afterwards he was lame, and though he lived to be a man, yet he was a cripple to the day of his death.

You will learn this from his own lips if you turn to ii. Samuel xix, 26. In that passage Mephibosheth is excusing himself for not having gone out with David, when he was driven from Jerusalem by his wicked son Absolom, and he says, "My lord, O king, my servant deceived me: for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass that I may ride thereon and go unto the king; because thy servant is lame."

Now there are some useful thoughts which rise from this little incident. It reminds us, that though we are all in constant danger of death, or injury, yet that children are chiefly so. Here even a careful nurse, anxious to keep her child safe, stumbles and lets him fall, so that he is lamed for life. Such things often happen; only last week there was mentioned in the newspaper the death of a child at Brighton. It was sick—the mother sent to the druggist for medicine—the druggist was out—and his apprentice made a mistake, and instead of the right medicine, sent a mixture called "black drop," which was deadly poison. The mother's only wish was to cure her child, yet she, without knowing it, gave it the poison which killed it.

And if there is danger, when mother or nurse are anxious and watchful, how much more danger is there, when they are thinking more of themselves than of their children.

What dangers then have we all passed through? what a mercy it is that we are all here this day alive

and well! what a mercy that we are not lame or crippled! that we are not blind or deaf, as we might have been.

To whom do we owe this? First, to Gop—secondly, to our Parents. And, therefore, we ought to give most humble and hearty thanks to Gop, our Father! And to show that these thanks are not mere talk, we ought to be grateful and obedient to our parents, or those who have watched over our childhood.

And also we ought to be tender and kind to those, who are less fortunate than ourselves, the lame—the halt—the blind.

We are to be thankful to God. Every moment we live we are under God's eye. All things around us are held together by His Hand. No care, however constant, can shield us from harm, unless He does.

A mother watches over a child with all love and tenderness; she does all she can to keep it well and strong, but sickness comes—it lies long on its bed, moaning in pain—there seems no hope—at

length, a favourable turn comes—the child begins to recover—but, a limb has shrunk—it is lame for life—all that man could do, was done—God, and God only could have saved it from being a cripple. But let me give a true case from the life of one of the most wonderful men, who have lived in our days.

John Kitto, was the son of a mason at Plymouth. One day forty years ago, his father was slating the roof of a house, the boy was carrying a load of slates up the ladder, he was just at the top, when he lost his footing, and fell backwards, from the height of thirty-five feet, into the paved court below. He was carried to his bed, and there he lay, utterly unconscious like one asleep, for a whole fortnight. When he came to himself, he asked for a book which he had been reading before he fell, his friends answered him, but they saw by his face that he didn't hear—they shouted, but still his eye and his tongue kept enquiring, as if they had not spoken to him at all—they then answered him by signs, "Why do you not speak?" he said sharply, "Pray

let me have the book,"—one of those near him wrote on a slate that the book had been given back to its owner—"But," said the poor boy, "Why do you write to me, why not speak?"—then the sad truth could no longer be kept back, and so there was written on the slate and held up before him, the dreadful words, "You are deaf."

And he was deaf to the end of his days. But, though deaf and very poor, yet the love of books was so strong, that he taught himself many languages; he travelled in many lands, and when he died last year, he left behind him many very useful and learned books, helping us to understand the "Best of all Books,"—the Bible.

In this case you see that all that man could do, was done. God, and God only could have saved the boy from deafness.

And in the same way, many children lose their eye-sight, from sickness, or from accidents, which neither father, nor mother, nor friend can prevent; but God only.

If then, Dear Children, we are neither lame, nor deaf, nor blind—if we can work without pain, and without hindrance—if we can hear the song of birds, and the sound of pleasant voices, if we can see the cheerful sunshine, and the bright flowers, and the faces of those we love, then we should be thankful to God—God, who up to this very hour has guarded and kept us from all danger.

"Human watch, from harm can't guard us; God must watch, and God must guard us."

But we do not see God, except in the way in which the little dying blind girl said that she could see Jesus, that was, "with the eye of her heart."

We do not see God, so as to give thanks to Him; but there are some whom we do see, whom God has given us to guard us, and help us, and we must show that our thanks are not mere talk, by the way we treat them.

If you are not lame, nor blind, nor deaf, remember that you owe this, under God, to your father or mother, or those who cared for you in childhood. If they had not watched over you, there are many evil things, which might readily have befallen you, therefore you should show your gratitude to God, by being obedient and dutiful to them; and think too, that it is not all children who have parents as kind as many of you have.

The newspapers help us to see into some very sad homes. They take the fronts off some houses, where children are treated in a very cruel manner by their own parents; and, I fear there are many others who are unkind, but whose names do not come into the newspapers, because the poor children have no one to take their part.

I will give you one such story, which I copied from the newspapers two months ago. At the town of Bedford, a man, his wife, and daughter, were condemned to prison for four years, for causing the death of a younger child.

They made her and her two little sisters work at a lace-pillow for fourteen hours a day, feeding them on dog-meal, and beating them with stinging nettles. On the night of March 29th, the child was very hungry, and begged her mother to give her some supper; the mother's answer to the appeal was a beating with her doubled-up stays, the poor child got into bed, with her two little sisters, and to comfort herself sung an hymn, then feeling herself weak, and thinking of the daily task, she uttered a short prayer, ending with "Lord Jesus, let me do my work next week." Next morning she was past all earthly troubles—her life ended with that simple prayer.

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Now, Children, think if instead of your own kind father and loving mother, you had parents, or brothers, or sisters like these, how wretched you would be! Try then to show God that you are thankful to Him for the great blessing of good kind friends at home, by being dutiful to them.

Remember how hard they have worked, or are working for you. Remember how many sleepless nights and anxious days your mother spent over your cradle; and make the best return you can, by

being fond and obedient to those who have done so much for you. Even if you should think that your parents have not done all they might for you; still be grateful to them for what they have done, and think of the thousands, who have no father or mother to care for them at all, and try, by your goodness and gentle obedience, to show your parents that you feel thankful for what they have done, or are doing for you, for in this way you are most likely to lead them to love you more dearly, and so to care for you better, and help you the more.

But, beside showing gratitude to God, for keeping you safe and sound, so that you are neither lame, nor blind, nor deaf, by being lovingly subject to your parents, you should do so in another way, namely, by being kind to those who are not so well off in these respects as you are.

As we go along the streets, how many persons, young and old, do we see who are deformed, or injured in some way. Here is one groping along in darkness holding the hand of a little girl, or led by

a dog in a chain! Here is another limping along painfully on crutches, or with his limbs so twisted that he cannot move without the greatest difficulty!

For many such cases there are hospitals provided, where they are cured or taken care of. There is in London, a house set apart for those who are lame and maimed, and called the "Cripples' Home." In many places, for instance in Nottingham, there are asylums for the blind, where they are taught to make baskets, and mats, and such things; and where they are taught to read by passing their fingers over pages, on which the letters are not black, but raised up from the page. There are also many refuges for those who are deaf and dumb, where they are taught and watched over.

It is a blessing that there are such places, and they are one of the chief glories of our country. But till, each of us most likely knows some one, often, sees some one, who, though not bad enough to be in such a house of refuge, yet is much hindered by

some infirmity or deformity in getting their daily bread.

Now, I wish to press this on you, that one way of showing that you are grateful to God, is by being kind to such persons, wherever, and whenever you can.

I will not think that there are any of you, who would join in teazing or laughing at them. To do this, shows a mean and cowardly spirit.

"Cowards are cruel, but the brave Love mercy, and delight to save."

I have read of a crippled beggar who was trying to pick up some old clothes that had been thrown to him from a window; a crowd of rude boys gathered round him, mimicking his awkward movements, and hooting at his rags and helplessness.

Presently, a noble little lad came up—pushed through the crowd—saw what was the matter—at once set to work and helped the cripple to gather up his gifts and put them in a bundle—and ran on.

A lady, the wife of one of the chief men in the town, saw the whole affair, and as the lad passed,

she asked his name, and wrote it down to tell her husband, that he might help him on in the world: and she said to him, as he left her, "God will bless you for doing that kind act." But it was not for show, or for reward, that the lad had done it; still the lady's kind words of approval were pleasing; he found too that he had made his own heart glad by doing good. It made him happy to think of the poor cripple's grateful look, and what made him happiest of all was, that he could almost hear his Father in heaven saying "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

Now is there nothing of this sort you can do, so as to make others, and yourself, happier? Is there not a lame girl in your mill? Day by day, the others go and come with brisk and active step, while she follows behind slowly and alone? Would it not be kind to stay and bear her company, even though you were five minutes later every day in getting home yourself? Or, is there not in your class at school, a boy that has a stutter in his 80

speech? you know, that laughing at him makes him much worse, would it not be kind to take no notice? or if a new teacher came, to do as one lad did in a class of which I have heard? When it came to the turn of the stammering boy to say his lesson, not being used to the teacher, he could not get on. The teacher, of course, thought that he hadn't learnt it, and most of the class were laughing at the poor boy, but one said, "Teacher, give him time." The teacher did so, and soon the lesson was said.

That was right conduct. That was acting out the lesson, which St. Paul gives us, and which I hope you will all try to act on; you will find it in Romans xii. 10. "Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love."

And there is one other thing, which I wish you to notice, namely, that it is not by doing any great things that you are to show your gratitude to God, in helping those who are less fortunate than you

are. It is little kindnesses that soothe the most when they come from those who can do no more.

You may be very poor—you may be in trouble and pain yourself, and yet you may by sympathy, that is, by suffering with another; help him to bear his pain, or trial.

There was once a blind man who had lost his way, in travelling over a bleak and lonely moor. He knew that there were dangerous places not far off; and so he sat down on the ground afraid to move another step. Bye and bye, an old and crippled man came along dragging his limbs slowly and painfully. The blind man heard his footsteps—shouted to him and asked him to come and guide him over the common, the other answered that he would do so gladly, only that he was lame of both feet; "but," he said to the blind man, "if you will take me on your strong back, then I will be to you instead of eyes, and you will be to me instead of feet." They did this, the blind man carried the lame man, while the lame man told the blind man which way to go, and in

this way, they both quickly and safely helped each other through the toils and dangers of the moor.

And so it will always be

"If you around another's grief
Your sympathies entwine,
To those who suffer give relief,
And make their sorrows thine,—
The kind compassion you bestow,
Its own reward will bring,
For while you soothe another's woe,
Your own will lose its sting."

A mere idle sympathy, for the wants and woes of others, which does nothing, but only weeps and sighs, this is not worth a straw.

There are some people that cry, as they read in a book, a story of sufferings that never really happened—they would cry if a pet bird died—or a favourite flower withered, or was broken—who yet can hear, and know, and see, great pain in a fellow-creature, and never think of trying to relieve it; or if they do relieve it at all, it is only with that

which they do not need themselves—the crumbs that fall from their table.

Such sympathy is worth little. Do not copy it. But if you come across any one whom you can help, help with that which costs you something. Do not only weep for them, but do for them what you can. And if you can do nothing, at least you can give something—something which you all have, and the value of which I have often told you. You can give loving gentle words, and they have power to bless, and power to soothe.

"Use gentle words, for who can tell
The blessings they impart!
How oft they fall (as manna fell)
On some nigh fainting heart!
In lonely wilds, by light-winged birds
Rare seeds have oft been sown!
And hope has sprung from gentle words
Where only griefs had grown."





v.

Che Children's Arfuge.

PREACHED IN S. MICHAEL'S SCHOOL-ROOM, DERBY, NOVEMBER 2, 1856.

"In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and His children shall have a place of refuge."—PROVERBS xiv. 26.

HE Book of Proverbs, has been sometimes called "The Child's Book" in the Bible; for though it is so full of wise sayings that only a man, taught by God, could have written it,

yet it is so simple that even children can understand the most of it.

There are few of you who do not see the meaning of this verse of the Child's Book, which I have chosen from the proper lesson for this Evening Ser-Here, King Solomon says, "In the fear of vice. the Lord is strong confidence," that is, trust and boldness. The fear of the Lord, as I told you in the second of these Sermons, is not the kind of fear that makes a slave crouch under a cruel master's whip—there is no confidence—no trust or boldness in that kind of fear. But it is the fear that a child has of losing the love of a tender father: it is a kind of fear that Abraham had, when he was ready to slay his son, sooner than disobey God, whom he loved. In this kind of fear there is strong confidence, there is boldness, and trust. It was this, that made Abraham sure, even while he was lifting up the knife to plunge it into his son's heart, "that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead." -Heb. xi. 19.

But it is further stated in the text, that God's "children shall have a place of Refuge." It is on this part of the verse that I am going to speak to you this afternoon, and, I will first tell you what a "place of refuge" is, and then show you what a mercy it is that God's children have one.

What is "a place of refuge?" It is, just, a safe place to which we may fly in time of danger.

In far-back times, and in a far-off land, there was a strange thing going on—there was no sea nor river near, and yet in the midst of the fields a man was building a monstrous ship! His neighbours laughed at him, but still they took his money, and helped him to build it.

Years rolled past, and still the man worked on—the hammers were always ringing—story above story of the ship rose up—and still the man kept building—still he kept telling all the people that they had better do the same, for that unless they turned from their sins to God, there was a day coming

when the dry land would be a sea, and they would surely perish.

The man grew grey—working and preaching. For more than a hundred years he had been laughed at as a fool and a madman—for more than a hundred years his big ship had stood empty on the plain, a mark for many a scoff and sneer. But at last the ship was finished outside and in, and the wicked people, who lived round about, wondered when they saw all kinds of animals coming up quietly in order, and walking or creeping, or flying into the great ship. Then they saw the man's wife go in, and his sons, and his sons' wives, and last of all the good old man himself, and then the door was shut after him, as if it had shut of itself, but it was God who shut him in.

Then the black clouds came gathering up the sky, and poured down sheets of water. The little brocks grew into rivers—the wells bubbled and broke up into lakes—the lakes swelled into seas.

The men and beasts, in terror, climbed up the

hill-sides and to the mountain tops. Still the waters rise—men and beasts are crowded together, struggling for standing room, on the highest places of the mountains! And still the waters rise—the last man is washed off—the highest mountain peak goes down beneath the wave, and now there is no coast—no crag—no cliff to break the giant billow that goes sweeping round and round the world!

On this shoreless ocean was there any place of refuge? Yes. The great ship that the good old man had built rides safely above the water floods. And as he bowed the knee before God on that awful day—as he gathered his family round the altar on the deck of that lonely ship, he might have taken these words on his lips if they had been written then, "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and His children shall have a place of Refuge."

Or it will explain the same thing if I try to draw another picture. Here is a beautiful smooth road, and one man, who seems very weary, travelling along it. Every now and then he looks anxiously behind him, as if expecting to see some one of whom he is afraid. When he comes to cross-roads he looks carefully at the finger-posts, and when he sees written on one, "To the City of Refuge," he goes the way it points.

At last, when the walls of a city are in sight, he looks behind him and he sees a man pursuing him. He knows who he is—he is the nearest relation of a man, whom he had killed without meaning to do so, and he is pursuing him to avenge his kinsman's death.

The man-slaver is in terror—he hears the feet of the avenger of blood close behind him-but he presses on with all speed—the city is close before him—the gate is open—if he can reach it, he is safe.

He almost feels the hot breath of the pursuer on his shoulder—but he makes an effort of despair, for it is for his life—he crosses the gate of the city—he stumbles and falls to the earth, faint and senseless on the threshold—but the door is closed behind him —the avenger is shut out—and he has a place of 90

refuge, for in this city, he may dwell securely, if he can show to the judges of the land that he had killed the man by accident, and had not any malice, or ill-will, against him before.

Now, just what the "ark" was to Noah and his family from the mighty waters. Just what the "city of refuge" was to the man-slayer from the avenger of blood. The same God is to all, who love, and fear, and trust in Him. In Him, "His children shall have a place of refuge."

But when we talk of a refuge, we take it for granted that there is danger. The ark was no "refuge" till the floods came; the city was no "refuge" till the avenger of blood threatened; and since God offers to be "a place of refuge," there must be dangers near. And, while I tell you what some of those dangers are, you will see what a blessing it is that all God's people, especially God's children, have a safe place of refuge.

One danger that often befalls God's children, is POYERTY.

Some of you perhaps may think that there are no children poorer than you are—but I fear there are.

In London there are hundreds of boys who have no home, no parents, nothing to do all day long but to wander about the streets, famished with cold and hunger! the keen wind blows through their tattered garments, and their little naked feet ache as they press the hard ground; then when night comes and it gets dark, as well as colder and colder, where are these poor little boys to go? Some of them lie down crouched close together, on what they call "hot stones" where the pavement is heated near a sugar-bakery; others crawl under the arches of a bridge, or into an unfinished house, there they stay all night and then get up again to find their food as they can.

For some of these little out-casts a home has been built in a part of London called Whitechapel, and this home for the homeless has painted on it its name "The Boy's Refuge;" and in it about 100 children are clothed and fed, and taught a trade, while at the

same time they are taught to look higher than these things, they are taught to say with David, (Psalm lix. 16.) "Thou, O Lord, hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble." For let us remember, it is not always by making people rich and comfortable that God shows Himself "a place of refuge" from poverty.

It is rather by making his children feel that, the white and yellow dust, which men call silver and gold, are not the truest riches; that the bread to eat is not the only bread there is; but that although we may have little enough of these, we may be rich; as we read in this morning's lesson (Prov. xiii. 7.), "There is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." How can that be? It is by giving up all else and seeking God for our portion. For then we can say, "Give what Thou wilt, without Thee we are poor; and with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away."

Another danger that befalls God's children is Pain.

And whether this be pain of body or pain of heart, God with us makes a place of refuge."

A little girl was once walking quietly down the street of a town while some boys were playing at the dangerous game of throwing stones. They did not see the little girl, and one of them threw a stone which struck her a bad blow on the eye.

She was carried home in great suffering—the doctor was sent for—when he came, he said that she must have something done to her eye, which would be very painful—and he got ready his lancet and other instruments—the little girl was lying in her father's arms, and he asked her if she was ready:

"Not yet, Father," she said, "What do you wish us to wait for, my child?" he asked gently.

I want to kneel in your lap and pray to Jesus first," she said. She knelt—she prayed for a few minutes—and then she bore the pain with the patience and courage of a woman.

And so God fulfilled this promise to one of His 94

children, and she had "a place of refuge" from sore pain of body.

And the same is true of pain of heart.

It is not often that children have to suffer grief and sorrow for a long time. But in all, whether young or old, there is no other refuge, save in God.

I told you last month, something of a lad, who lost his hearing by a fall from a ladder as he was helping his father to slate a house.

This poor dumb lad was afterwards apprenticed to a shoemaker, who used him very badly; if the boy made a wry stich, he threw a shoe in his face—if he held the thread too short, he struck him on the hand with the iron part of the hammer.

The lad was in such constant misery, that he was almost driven to kill himself; but he had been taught to know that there is a God who orders all things for us, to him he looked, and cried in the bitterness of his soul, "Father of mercy forgive me, if I wish I had never been born—Oh! that I were

dead, if death were an end of being; but as it is not, teach me to endure life—enjoy it, I never can."

And he was enabled to "endure, as seeing Him who is invisible;" and he found God to be, what David declared Him, in one of the Psalms which we read this morning (ix. 9.), "The Lord will be a defence for the oppressed: even a refuge in due time of trouble."

Another danger which besets God's children, is Temptation.

Temptation is when Satan tries us to see whether we will yield to sin, or whether we will resist it. Satan does this in many ways, but his favourite plan, is to use wicked men or boys to lead others astray.

It is very hard to stand firm. If we were left to ourselves we should fall. If we trust in God, He will always be "a place of refuge" to us, though that place may not always be what we should expect.

It was in the month of August, two years ago,

that Knud Iverson, a Norwegian boy, whose parents had settled in America, went out to the pasture, light-hearted and happy, to drive home the cow.

On his way he had to pass a stream of water, and near it, there were loitering some idle ill-looking lads, much bigger than himself. They hailed Knud as he passed, and told him that they wanted him to go into a garden that was near and steal some apples.

But Knud, though only thirteen, knew and loved what was right, and he was not afraid to say so, though the boys were all much older than he was, so he answered at once, "I cannot steal for anybody."

The big boys said that he must do it, and if he did not, they would duck him in the river.

Knud was firm, and so those wicked and cowardly lads dragged him to the river, and in spite of his cries and struggles, they plunged him in.

But the brave boy, even with the water gurgling in his throat, never flinched, for he knew that God had said, "Thou shalt not steal."

His tormentors, provoked by his firmness, deter-

mined to see if they could not conquer, and kept pushing him under the water, and each time, asking him if he would do as they wished him.

But, "No, no," was the only answer that they got, even as the stifled cries of the drowning child grew fainter and fainter, and his struggles feebler and feebler.

And so the martyr-boy was drowned—He could die, but he could not steal.

Who, but God could give such strength to a mere child? He it was who provided "a place of refuge" for this brave and steadfast boy from the fierce and cruel temptations of the wicked.

And, Dear Children, the same God will enable you to stand firm in every evil day, when you are tempted by bad companions, or in any other way.

Even though your trials seem so great, that you are ready to think that God means to cast you off, that His mercy is clean gone for ever, still though your heart faints, and your faith fails, yet be not afraid, God has not forgotten you; He knows just

what is best for you, He knows how much you can bear, and He will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.

There is one other danger which besets all alike, that is, Death.

No one, young or old, strong or weak, can escape death, but it is only God's children who "have a place of refuge" in it.

Let me draw another picture for your minds to look at. This great plain is called the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. It is almost filled with people, of many different nations, who have come together because their king Nebuchadnezzar has commanded them. In the midst of the plain stands a great golden image, ninety feet high, which the king had made, and near the image the king stands himself, and all his great men round him; and now, there is a burst of music; and lo! all the people and princes are worshipping the image with their faces on the ground!

Why do these three men not fall down and worship

too? They are Jews, servants of the true God—they will not worship an idol. And when the king hears that they will not worship his idol, he is full of rage—he orders the furnace to be made seven times hotter—he bids the tallest and strongest of his soldiers to take up these Jews, and fling them bound into the flaming fire. The soldiers do so, and fall down scorched and killed by the fierce heat.

But why is Nebuchadnezzar so amazed, as he stands afar off, and gazes into the fiery furnace? He may well be amazed—he had seen three men cast into the fire, tied hand and foot; and now he sees four men loose, walking up and down in the flames, "and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Surely there must be a place of refuge for God's children everywhere, when there is one even in this fiery furnace! and he can bring His servants out of it unhurt, without even smelling of the fire.

And why was it that God thus shielded these three youths? It was because they loved and feared the

true God—"they trusted in God that He would deliver them;" and He did deliver them—for the very Son of God came to them, and walked with them, and would not allow a hair of their heads to be hurt.

And still now-a-day, when death comes to his children, God is a place of refuge—Jesus still walks with them, and comforts them.

A mother once found on the bed of her dying child, a piece of paper, on which some words were feebly traced with a pencil, and asked her what they were. "Oh!" she answered, "I was only trying to write some farewell lines to my dcar ones—in the shape of a little hymn—and if you will get a pencil, dearest mother, I will dictate them to you, for I find I am too weak to write."

And then she repeated to her mother a hymn, of which this was the first verse—

"'Tis hard to part, 'tis hard to part,
But oh! ye would not have me stay,
When Jesus calls me to depart,
And I so long to fly away.

He calls me to my blessed home: O come, Lord Jesus, quickly come."

And how sweet and simple are these other little verses, said to have been written by another "dying child."

"Put your arm around me, Mother,
Draw your chair beside my bed;
Let me lean upon your bosom
This poor, weary, aching head.

Once I thought I could not leave you—
Once I was afraid to die;
Now I feel 'tis Jesus calls me
To his mansion in the sky.

Why should you be grieving, Mother,
That your child is going home,
To that land where sin and sorrow,
Pain and weakness never come."

Here, then, dear children, are four out of the many dangers that stand thick around us all. Poverty, pain, temptation, and death. What a blessing it is to have the promise of God himself, that in all these "His children shall have a place of refuge."

And though they come on as sudden as the flood, or swift as the avenger, or fierce as the seven-fold flame – yet they cannot harm any one of whom it can be said "The Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."—Deut. xxxiii. 27. They cannot harm any one who can say from his heart, as David says—(Psalm. lvii. 1.)—"Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in Thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast."







VI.

The Joy of the Pure.

PREACHED IN S. MICHAEL'S SCHOOL-ROOM, DERBY,
DECEMBER 7, 1856.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."—S. Matthew v. 8.

OU all know these words very well, for they come from what is called "the Sermon on the Mount."

"The mount" was some well-known hill not far from Capernaum. It was the custom of the Jews, 104

that the teacher always sat, while the listeners stood round him, so it was not much out of the common way when those, who followed Jesus, stood round Him on the hill, while He taught them, and preached to them.

It was a lovely place for a sermon. As they stood on the rising ground, they would see the lofty mountain of Hermon on the north, crowned with glittering snow—on the west they would see mount Carmel, clothed in the living green of waving woods—the beautiful blue lake of Galilee lay beneath them—the cloudless sky was over them, and the fresh air of the morning round about them.

It was the best church for the best of sermons. Everything around them looked bright and joyous, and the sermon of Jesus caught the tone, and told of happiness and blessing.

But the blessedness He spoke about was of a kind which those who heard him would not understand.

They thought, "happy are the rich and brave, who are full of life and strength, and who can push

their way in the world;" but Jesus said—"Blessed," happy, "are the poor in spirit." They thought, "Happy are the light and gay, who have the smile always on the cheek, the laugh always on the lip;" but Jesus said, "Blessed," happy, "are they that mourn." They thought, "Happy is the man that has his enemy in his power, and can take vengeance on him, for revenge is sweet." They would have their minds full of the cruel ways of their Roman masters, and so it would seem a riddle to them when the great Teacher said, "Blessed," happy, "are the merciful."

And then He came to the saying of the text, "Blessed," happy, "are the pure in heart, for they shall see Gop."

May God help us all to learn and to believe the two things which this verse teaches, namely, that those who are pure in heart are happy, and that they are happy because they shall see God.

Our first question then is, what is meant by "pure in heart?" Anything is said to be pure, when it 106

has no spot or stain upon it. When we got up the other morning, and saw the ground all white with snow; the roof, the trees, the streets all covered with the clear, dazzling snow, that snow was pure.

When you fill a glass with water from a sparkling spring, and hold it up and look through it, and see it as clear as crystal, that water is pure.

And when God, who searches our hearts, looks on them, and sees no stain of sin, no spot of evil, then a heart is pure. But that, I am sorry to say, is a sight which God never sees, though His eye is on every soul in the wide, wide world, at once.

Why is this? Why are there not many hearts pure in God's sight? It is, because man's heart was once pure; but he sinned, and it is pure no longer; and nothing but a miracle. that is, a wonderful work of God, can make it pure now.

The snow that fell the other day, it fell from God's hand pure and white, but before it had been long upon the ground it was soiled.

"Blacks" from the chimneys fell on it, people began to go about to their work, and very soon it was trodden down in the streets, and became brown and dirty.

Now, no power of man can clean and make white again snow that has once got soiled, and no power of man can cleanse a heart that once was pure, but is now stained and grimed with sin. God, and Gon only, can do this. It is only because Christ, the Pure One, died on the Cross for us impure ones, that guilt is wiped off from our souls. "The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

There is no other washing that will do; but, blessed be God,

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

It is here, and here only, that we must come if we would wash and be clean. In no other way can we

become pure in heart; and therefore we say in that beautiful hymn—

"Rock of ages, cleft for me,"
Let me hide myself in thee,
Let the water and the blood
From thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure;
Cleanse from guilt and make me pure."

But though it is only this that can make our hearts pure, so that we can enter into heaven, yet we must all try to have as few stains to wash off as we can.

And, dear children, if you wish to be happy, do all you can to keep your hearts pure.

Though they have got the weakness and the stain which Adam's sin brought on us all, still I hope that many of your hearts are pure; they have not got the black marks of sin, that stain the heart of grown-up people. Oh! try to keep them pure.

We can all soil the snow easy enough, we none of us can clean it. We can all stain our hearts, but we cannot clean them. Your hearts are purer now

than they will ever be again; and if you wish to be really happy, you will pray and strive to keep them clean, by shutting every door in the face of sin, and keeping sin outside.

I have read of a man who lived on a lonely island, and built himself a mud house to live in; he was so much afraid of wild beasts that he would not make a door, but he made a hole, high up in the wall, and he climbed up to this hole by a ladder, and when he had got in he drew the ladder after him, and then he felt that he was safe.

Now, if our hearts were houses like this, without any door, then we might hope that they would be kept pure without any trouble of ours. But alas! there are doors by which enemies can get into our hearts. The two chief doors are called Eye-gate and Ear-gate, and the black things that spot and soil the white pure snow of the soul come in by these two gates.

Do you ask what comes in through Eye-gate? I answer sights of wickedness come in by it.

There are many wicked deeds that are done; and I am sorry to say many children—yes, and grown people too—instead of shutting their eyes, look at these things and laugh at them.

Such a sight is a drunken man or woman. I would rather walk ten miles any day than meet a drunken person, because it is so hateful a sight to see a man, formed in God's likeness, making himself lower than the brute beasts of the field. And yet I see boys and girls, men and women, laughing at the sight, as if it were a good joke, and nothing more.

Ah! every such laugh—every such sight, when it flies in at Eye-gate, falls like a black smut on the pure snow of the heart.

Another kind of sight, which comes in at Eye-gate, is the looking at bad books. There are many bad books that are doing the Devil's dirty work in the world. They are handed about secretly, for even those who have them, are almost ashamed to own them. I hope such books may never come into your hands; but if they do, fling them from you

unread and unopened; for if you read them—if you look at their filthy pictures, then the black smuts fly through the Eye-gate, and settle on the pure snow of the heart, and from that you can never move them, do what you will.

Listen to the words of a minister in America, he says:—"About twenty-five years ago I made friends with a lad at school. One morning, at a street corner, he handed me a book; we stood at the corner for a few moments, while I looked at the pictures, and read a few pages in that polluting volume. I handed it back to him, and never saw it again; but the poison took effect—the sin left its mark; I cannot rub out the thoughts which in that quarter of an hour that vile book lodged in my heart, and which still haunt me, like foul spectres, during my private-prayers, in the church, and even at the Communion Table."

Oh! what sad staining did that one quarter of an hour make on the pure snow of a human soul.

And Dr. Ryland said the very same—"It is 112

dangerous to read any impure book; you will never get it out of your mind till you are dead. My imagination was tainted young, and I shall never get rid of the taint till I get to heaven."

Oh! then beware, I speak especially to the older among you, beware of bad books!

But there is another gate, Ear-gate, and through this also many things come in, which soil the pure snow of the soul.

I will only speak to you of one set of people, whothrow their rubbish and filth in at this gate—I mean BAD COMPANIONS.

There are always some, who having had sin and wickedness, filthiness and foolish-talking, poured into their own ears, think it clever to pour it out again into the ears of others; and while they do so, they not only blacken the hearts of others, but make darker the stain that is in their own.

Children, do let me entreat you to have no ears for bad companions. If you cannot stop their talk, do not join in it; be silent, and show you dislike it; for keeping our own lips shut is often the best way to close the lips of others. No one talks long when he gets no answer.

Remember you cannot go with bad companions without having the pure snow of your hearts soiled.

You know what soft pitch is. Did you ever touch it? If you did, you found it stick to your fingers, so that you could not get it off, though you washed your hands many times, still the dark stain was there.

Now bad companions are like palings covered with fresh soft pitch, and you cannot go near them without danger—you cannot touch them without getting harm to your soul.

If you go near a wicked boy or girl, and they say wicked or foolish words and you hear them, that is like pitch; it will pass in at Ear-gate, and it will stick there, and not come out again. You will remember the wrong word, and think about it, and it will soil the pure snow within, even if you never say it again. And if you do say it, then you make

the black mark blacker; and at the same time you put pitch on some other person's soul.

Keep away then from bad children, as you would from a pitchy paling. Do not make them your friends, or they will make you like themselves.—
"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise." If you make good children your friends they will teach you what is good, and help to keep you good, "but the companion of fools shall be destroyed." Who can touch pitch and not be defiled?

There are other "blacks" that fly in at Ear-gate as there are at Eye-gate; they fly most at night, for just as beetles and vermin swarm out of their holes in the night, so those whose deeds are evil love darkness rather than light; therefore if we are obliged to be out in the streets at night, let us hurry through them as fast as we can with eyes and ears both shut, if it be possible. For what I have said will be enough to show us, that if we want to keep our hearts pure we must set a watch at these two gates, or else the "blacks" will come in when we are off our

guard, and then it will be more than we can do, to get rid of them again.

At Eye-gate we must learn to look up to God, and he will look down on us and help us; and at Ear-gate we must listen to His voice, so that we may obey him, and be deaf to all those who speak against Him.

And in trying to keep your hearts pure, do not count any sin a little one.

If into a glass of pure water you put one drop of ink, the water is pure no longer—the black spreads through and through. And so, one little stain or sin—one wicked sight—one wicked word—one glimpse at a bad book—one walk with a bad companion, and you cannot tell how deep the stain may be, and how widely it may spread.

It is just like throwing a pebble into a pond—it drops in with a splash—now look at the rings and circles, how they get larger and larger till they fill the whole pond.

Our heart is like a pond—every thought—every word is a stone thrown into it. It may seem a small

matter to say that little word, or to think that little thought, and yet it may defile the heart—yes, and ruin the whole life.

A boy once slily took a marble from another boy who did not miss it, so it was not known. Soon afterwards the same boy took some cake from his mother's cupboard, but she didn't find it out. Next he stole some money from his father, but he didn't notice it. And at last he robbed his master, and that was found out—he was taken to prison, and sent far away to a strange land, and never saw father or mother again.

Perhaps if he had not cheated the other boy out of the marble, he would never have robbed his master, and so come to a bad end.

Oh! then, children, be afraid of the smallest black speck on the pure snow—think no sin to be small, for it may lead on to a bigger and a bigger. Be afraid of evil in the bud—watch against the very first steps down-hill from what is right, and pure, and true.

Oh! avoid stains now, while you are young, for

remember what you feel and think now, will remain with you all your days.

In America, there are many Germans who have settled there in their youth, and lived there all their lives. A minister, who lived among them, says, that often when they are on their dying bed, the aged Germans begin to talk in the German language, the tongue of their childhood, although they have long ceased to speak it, and when in health seem altogether to have forgotten it.

How this shows that the thoughts, and words, and ways of early days, cannot be rubbed out; and therefore, we ought not to learn anything which is not worth knowing.

But why should we wish to be pure? to keep ourselves pure? why does Christ call those who do so, "blessed and happy?"—"Blessed are the pure in heart," for, this is the reason, "they shall see Goo."

In Eastern countries, kings and princes very seldom are in public; they are almost always in their palaces and gardens, so that to come before them to see them, is the greatest honour; and this is the promise that is given to "the pure in heart."

"They shall see Goo" now. For they are able to look up with the eye of faith, and to see Him in every sunbeam and in every star—and with a glad and quiet spirit they see God in every blessing they receive, and in every sorrow that comes over them they see Him too!

Yes, and even when the last trouble and pain of death is stealing over them, they see God then! It may be said of them, as it was of a holy maiden, who was called by her friends, "the lily of heaven," she was so white—so pure in heart,

"That her religion grew more bright
The darker grew the world's dark night,
Filling her soul with such pure light,
High heaven seemed open to her sight.

With saintly pale face thus she went Out of this world's great discontent, Up through the starry firmament Into the place of Pure Content."

For the pure in heart not only see Gon now, they

shall see Him in heaven. The Bible tells us this plainly—I will give you verses to prove it, from the first writer in the Book, and from the latest. Job is thought to have written his book, first of all the books in the Bible, and he says, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."—xix. 25, 26, 27.

And St. John, who certainly lived the latest of all the writers of the Bible, says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him, as He is "—(i. John iii. 2, 3); and the apostle adds, "Every man, that hath this hope in him, the hope of seeing Gop, purifieth himself even as He is pure"



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